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SENATE BILL 1690 By  
Leatherwood

HOUSE BILL 1447  
By Haley

AN ACT providing for the erection of directional signs for Davies Manor on Interstate 40 in Shelby County.

WHEREAS, Davies Manor is considered to be the oldest house in Shelby County and is one of the oldest structures of any type in West Tennessee: and

WHEREAS, the western portion of the two-story, colonial-style log house was built circa 1807 by a Native American chief; Joel W. Royster built the eastern portion of the house and connecting dog trot after he acquired the property in 1831; and

WHEREAS, in 1851, Royster sold the log house and adjacent property to Logan Early Davies, who with his brother James Baxter Davies, acquired land around the Brunswick community, which eventually totaled 2,000 acres; and

WHEREAS, the road near the entrance to Davies Plantation (now U.S. Highway 64) was the stagecoach route eastward from Memphis, and during the Civil War both Confederate and Union armies used this road; and

WHEREAS, the Davies manor sits on its original foundation of sandstone pillars in a 30-acre grove of trees with a Native American mound on the east side; the house is built of squared, hand-hewn, white oak logs with square-notched corners; and

WHEREAS, in 1976, Ellen Davies-Rodgers (1903-1994), donated the residence and surrounding acreage to the Davies Manor Association, a not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization which still owns Davies Manor and maintains it as a house museum open to the public; and

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WHEREAS, Davies Manor is less than one (1) mile from the intersection of Interstate Highway 40 and Canada Road in eastern Shelby County, and signs designating such exit as the appropriate exit for access to Davies Manor would provide much deserved recognition for this important historic site, in addition to directing motorists wishing to visit such site; now, therefore, BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, it shall be the duty of the department of transportation to erect and maintain directional signs at sites and facilities of educational, historical and cultural interest to the citizens of the state, including the erection of such signs for the historic site of Davies Manor at Exit 20 (Canada Road/Lakeland), both eastbound and westbound, on Interstate 40 in Shelby County.

SECTION 2. The department of transportation shall also erect directional signs on Canada Road immediately adjacent to both the eastbound and westbound exit ramps off Interstate 40. Such signs shall read: "Davies Manor - Turn Left on Davies Plantation East Road" and shall bear a directional arrow pointing northward.

SECTION 3. The erection of such directional signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the commissioner of transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.